



May 24, 2010

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Kentucky, 2nd District  
510 Cannon Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Guthrie:

A bill recently introduced in Congress could significantly damage Kentucky's signature Bourbon industry. I am writing today to ask you to oppose H.R. 5034 on behalf of the Kentucky Distillers' Association and our member distilleries.

H.R. 5034 has many far-reaching and negative consequences for all sectors of the beverage alcohol industry. Its proponents claim that it is needed to protect state-based alcohol regulation – yet it goes much farther than that.

Here is a direct example of its potential impact to our distilling industry:

For more than 200 years, Kentucky's legendary distilleries have crafted the world's finest Bourbons, using a time-honored process that today is regulated by strict federal "standards of identity."

But under H.R. 5034, individual states could establish their own formulas, labeling and bottling standards for Bourbon, overriding the uniform federal requirements as now prescribed by the U.S. Treasury Department.

As a result, any state could then create its own competing definition of Bourbon that would wipe out centuries of Kentucky craftsmanship, quality and heritage.

Allowing individual states to concoct a whiskey and call it "Bourbon," based on their own definition, would destroy the industry as we know it today.

The resulting chaos would undermine one of the Commonwealth's most important economic and tourism industries and a thriving global export. As you know, Kentucky produces 95 percent of the world's Bourbon, and its impact in the Bluegrass is staggering:



- 10,000 good-paying jobs
- \$125 million each year in tax revenue
- \$100 million in current capital investment
- Nearly 500,000 annual visits to the famous Kentucky Bourbon Trail®
- More than \$750 million in U.S. exports

Kentucky is proud to be the birthplace of Bourbon, and the only place in the world where visitors can enjoy the true Bourbon experience. H.R. 5034 threatens that tradition and jeopardizes a growing, successful industry that is hailed around the world.

On behalf of Kentucky's signature Bourbon and distilled spirits industry, I strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 5034 and ask that you make your colleagues aware of its potentially disastrous repercussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Gregory". The signature is stylized and includes a flourish at the end.

Eric Gregory  
President  
Kentucky Distillers' Association